

TENANT IMPROVEMENTS

Planning and Development Department

Building Permits Division

604 927-3441 / permits@coquitlam.ca

GUIDE OVERVIEW

This guide is intended to assist the applicant with their drawing requirements for a building permit application. This is only an example of the information required for a drawing set submission, and is not intended to be reproduced for a building permit application.

This guide is intended to compliment the [Major Building Permits brochure](#), [Building Permits and Inspections brochure](#), [Starting a Business Brochure](#), [Tenant Improvement Checklist](#) and the [Tenant Improvement Permit Application Form](#).

What is a Tenant Improvement and when is a Building Permit required?

A tenant improvement is new construction or alteration proposed to a building. Any interior or exterior alterations or change of use to an existing commercial, industrial and multi-residential building requires a building permit. For example, construction of walls, floors, stairs, installation of doors, shelving, equipment, plumbing fixtures, additional or relocated sprinkler heads, etc.

Examples:

- Increase floor area to an existing building.
- Add mezzanine or storey within an existing space.
- Install or modify commercial kitchen exhaust system.
- Proposed tenant improvements requiring Preliminary Plan Approval (***see information later in guide***).
- Alter the interior layout or exterior of a building.
- Re-piping.
- Modifications to the fire suppression system (building sprinklers)
- Modifications to the Fire Protection or Life Safety Systems
- Racking.
- Changing the use of a business.
- Occupant load changes.
- Elevator recall system upgrades.
- Fire alarm panel replacement.

SUBTRADES

All subtrade permits shall be obtained by a certified trade contractor, licensed in the City of Coquitlam. Please note, the City of Coquitlam, issues plumbing and sprinkler permits however electrical and gas permits are applied for through [Technical Safety BC](#). Electrical Information such as load calculation and single line diagram showing the size and type of service equipment, grounding, over current devices, feeders, branch circuits, distribution panels and electrical room layout may be required. Depending on the extent of new plumbing work proposed, information regarding size of water pipes, plumbing vent termination and sanitary tie-ins may also be required.

REFERRAL TO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Development Planning approval may be required before a building permit can be obtained. The following are some examples:

- Changing the use of a business (e.g. from an office to a school).
- Changing the floor area use (e.g. increased office area in a previous warehouse space).
- Adding seats to a restaurant.
- Modifying the exterior of a building.
- Increasing floor area in an existing space by adding a mezzanine or addition to the building.
- Altering the parking layout for a building.

Requirements for Preliminary Plan Approval should be confirmed with the Planning and Development Department prior to signing a lease or beginning building alterations. A building permit will not be issued if Preliminary Plan Approval is required.

Note: A building permit must be applied for within 90 days of Preliminary Plan Approval. Further information may be obtained from the Planning and Development Department at 604-927-3440.

UNAUTHORIZED CONSTRUCTION

Unauthorized construction (un-permitted work) must be removed or the appropriate permits must be obtained and the construction's BC Building Code and bylaw compliance demonstrated.

EXISTING BUILDINGS

The BC Building Code applies to all buildings irrespective of the date of construction. The BC Building Code permits some latitude in its application to existing buildings but simple rules applicable to all situations cannot be provided. The applicant is encouraged to discuss the project particulars with Building Permits Division staff.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

The provisions of the BC Building Code are not intended to limit the appropriate use of materials, appliances, systems, equipment, methods of design or construction procedures. Please refer to the [Alternative Solutions Guide](#) for more information regarding the City's policies and practices.

INFORMATION AT CITY HALL

Tenants require permission from the owner of the building to view any plans on file and to apply for a building permit. We advise new tenants to check the approved plans at City Hall, if available. The plans show construction that was allowed by previous building permits. You will need to provide an [Agent Authorization Form for File Access or Permit Application](#) to view and make copies of the plans at City Hall. For more information, contact the Building Division at 604-927-3406 or permits@coquitlam.ca.

PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Three (3) sets if all required plans must be submitted.

Site Plan (see example 1)

1. The site plan must be drawn to a minimum scale of 1/8" to 1'0" (or equivalent metric scale).
2. Indicate the relationship of work to adjacent tenancies.
3. Show the location of the building on the property.
4. Show all other buildings on the property.
5. Show the North arrow, the property lines, label the streets and show the parking spaces.
6. Identify the location of the tenant space in the building.
7. Identify the parking spaces allocated for this tenant space (off-street parking is based on the current Zoning bylaw).

Floor Plan (see example 2)

1. The floor plan must be drawn to a minimum scale of 1/4" to 1'0" (or equivalent metric scale).
2. Provide a key plan for the floor the tenant space is located on (see sample 3).
3. Identify the use of each tenant space on the storey the tenant space is located.
4. Floor plans are required for each floor, including mezzanines.
5. Show the overall dimensions and square footages for all floors.
6. Label the use of all rooms.
7. Show the interior dimensions and square footages of all rooms.
8. Show walls separating this tenant space from adjacent tenant spaces.

Floor Plan (continued)

9. Show washrooms and washroom fixtures. (Please note, your plumbing contractor may need to submit plumbing isometric drawings if you are altering the drainage and/or water pipe systems.
10. Show equipment location (i.e. tables, chairs, shelves, appliances, roof top units, etc.).
11. Show all existing and new partition walls.
12. Indicate the construction of the walls, including wall finish material, new and existing (i.e. stud size, spacing and thickness of interior finish).
13. Show all doors, hallways and stairs.
14. Indicate the sizes of all doors and the direction of their swings.
15. Show stairs and indicate width of stairs.
16. Indicate width and length of hallways.
17. Show travel distance from all floor areas to an exit door or an exit stair.
18. If constructing a mezzanine or a floor, the plans must be certified by a Structural Engineer. Two sets of original sealed and signed structural plans are required. An original sealed and signed Schedule B Letters of Assurance are required.
19. If constructing a mezzanine or a floor, the density calculation for the site may be required. (Density is based on the applicable zone in the current Zoning Bylaw).

Cross Section (see example 3)

1. The cross section must be drawn to a minimum scale of 1/4" to 1'0" (or equivalent metric scale).
2. Show the walls separating your tenant space from adjacent tenant spaces.
3. Indicate the construction of the roof.
4. Show the mezzanine or additional floors and indicate the construction.
5. Indicate the height above and below the mezzanine or additional floors.
6. Show the stairs to the mezzanine or additional floors.
7. Indicate rise, run, headroom, handrail or guard height and the width of stairs.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Please be aware that if you are proposing an assembly occupancy, construction requirements for the entire building may need to be upgraded. You may be required to retain the services of a Registered Professional to address the architectural aspects of the Building Code requirements. Assembly occupancy means the occupancy or the use of the building, or part thereof, by a gathering of persons for civic, political, travel, religious, social, educational or like purposes, or the consumption of food or drink. For example, assembly halls, churches, dance schools, day care centers, schools and restaurants.

FEES

Per the City of Coquitlam's [Fees and Charges Bylaw](#), you will have to pay an application fee when you apply. The permit fee is based on the calculated construction and equipment value within your tenant space and is payable when the permit is ready to be picked up and issued. The fees are broken down as follows:

- 25% of the permit value when the application is made.
- Balance of the permit value when the permit is issued.

INSPECTIONS

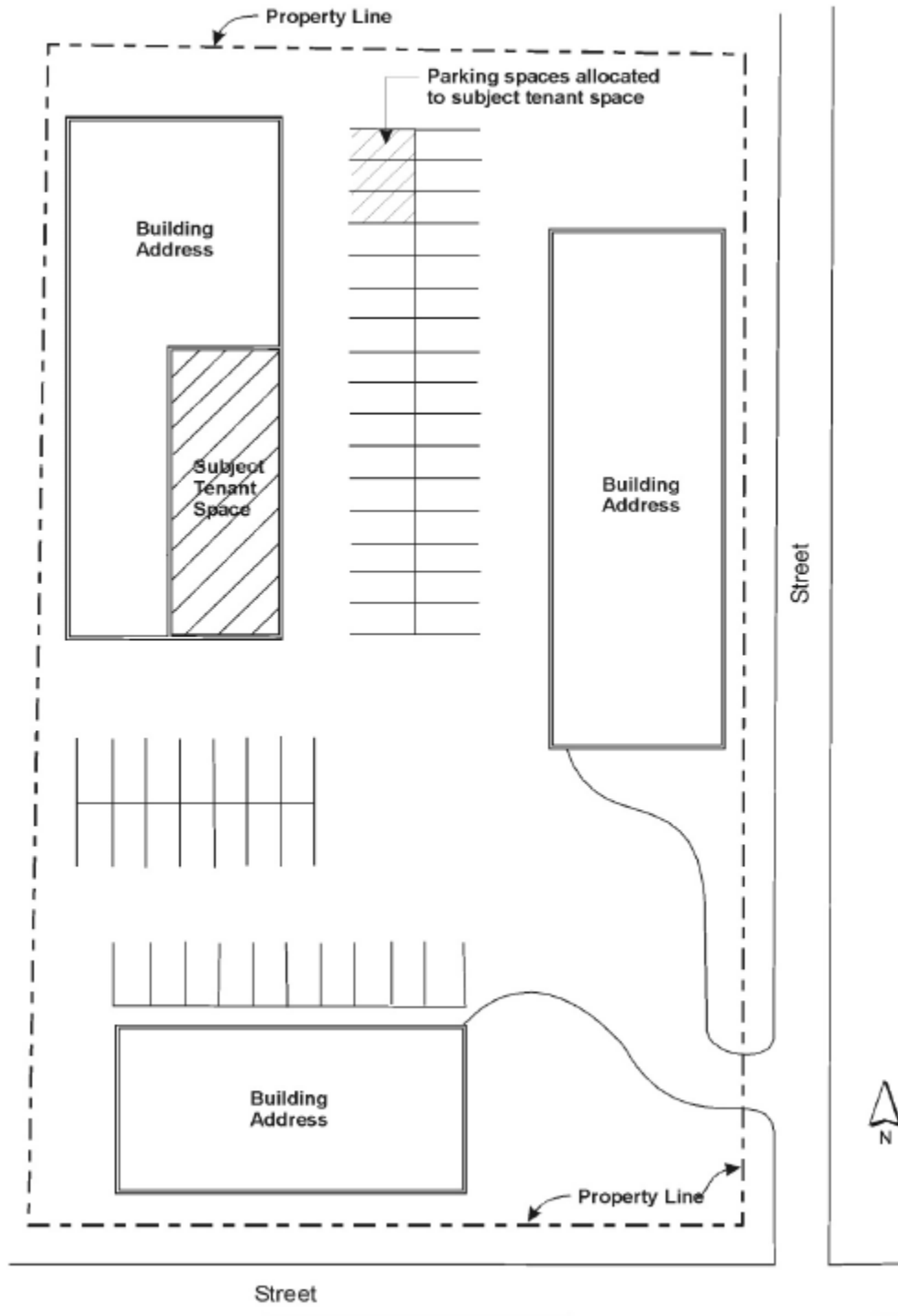
Complete information on inspections can be found on our [Inspections page](#).

- Buildings and/or structures requiring a building permit will also require inspections performed by City Building Officials.
- Plumbing permits for new plumbing systems and services will require inspections by City Plumbing Officials.
- Fire suppression systems (building sprinklers) will require inspections by City Plumbing Officials.

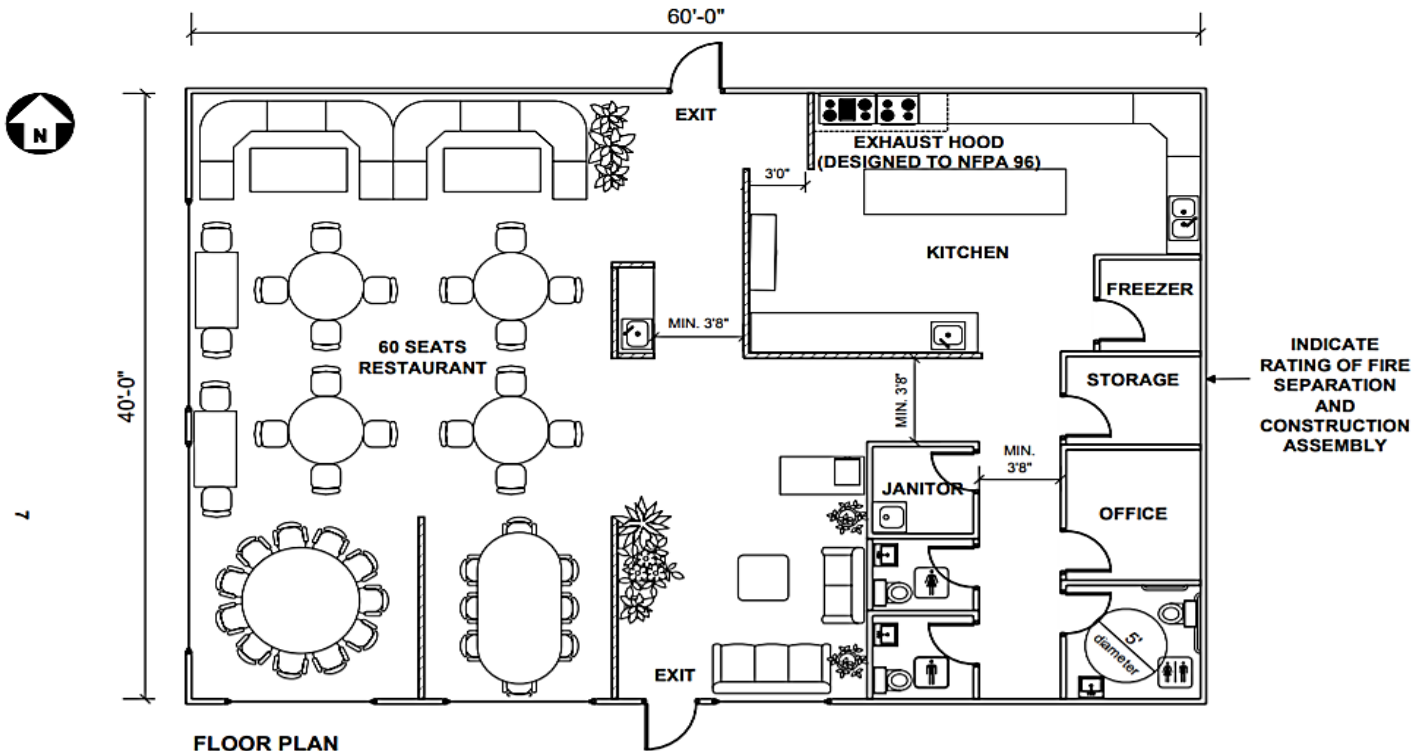
SEE THE FOLLOWING PAGES FOR EXAMPLES

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Site Plan (example 1)





Floor Plan (Example 2)



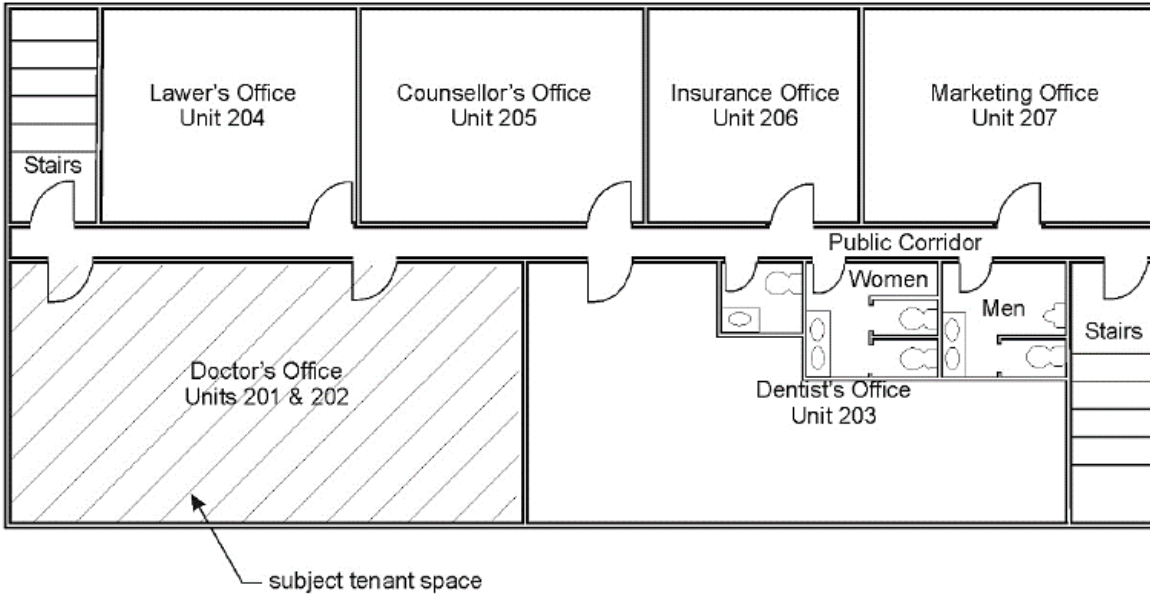
FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: See Brochure

LEGEND

-  Existing wall to remain
-  New wall - indicate wall assembly

PROJECT ADDRESS:
DESIGNER:

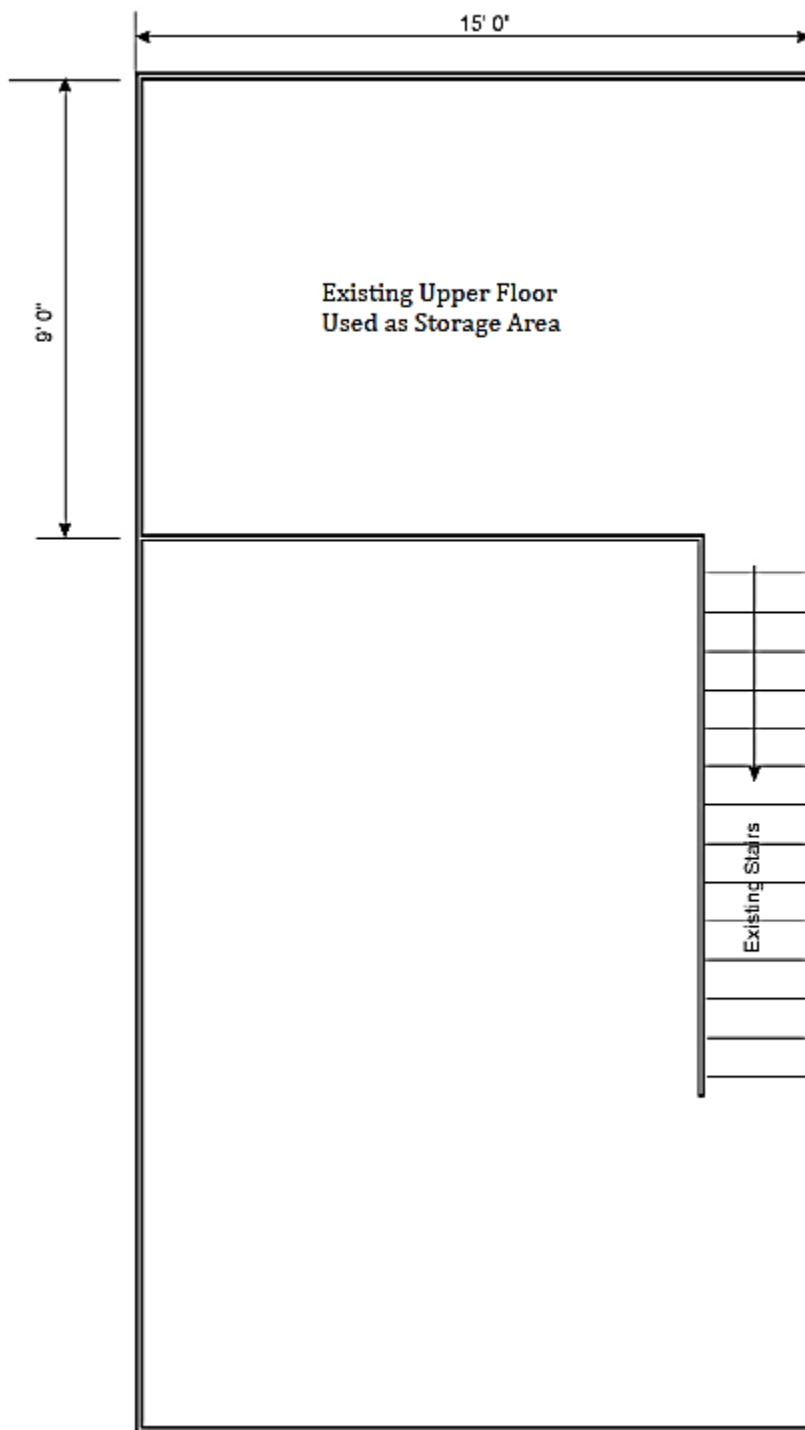
Key Plan – Second Floor (sample 3)



A floor plan is a view downward from above and is drawn at a particular vertical position (commonly about 3 feet above the floor). Objects below this level are seen, objects shown at this level are “cut” in plan-section, and objects above this vertical position are omitted or shown dashed.

Walls and partitions shall be shown at the appropriate width for the scale used (walls drawn as single lines will not be accepted).

Floor Plan (Upper Floor)



Cross Section (Sample 4)

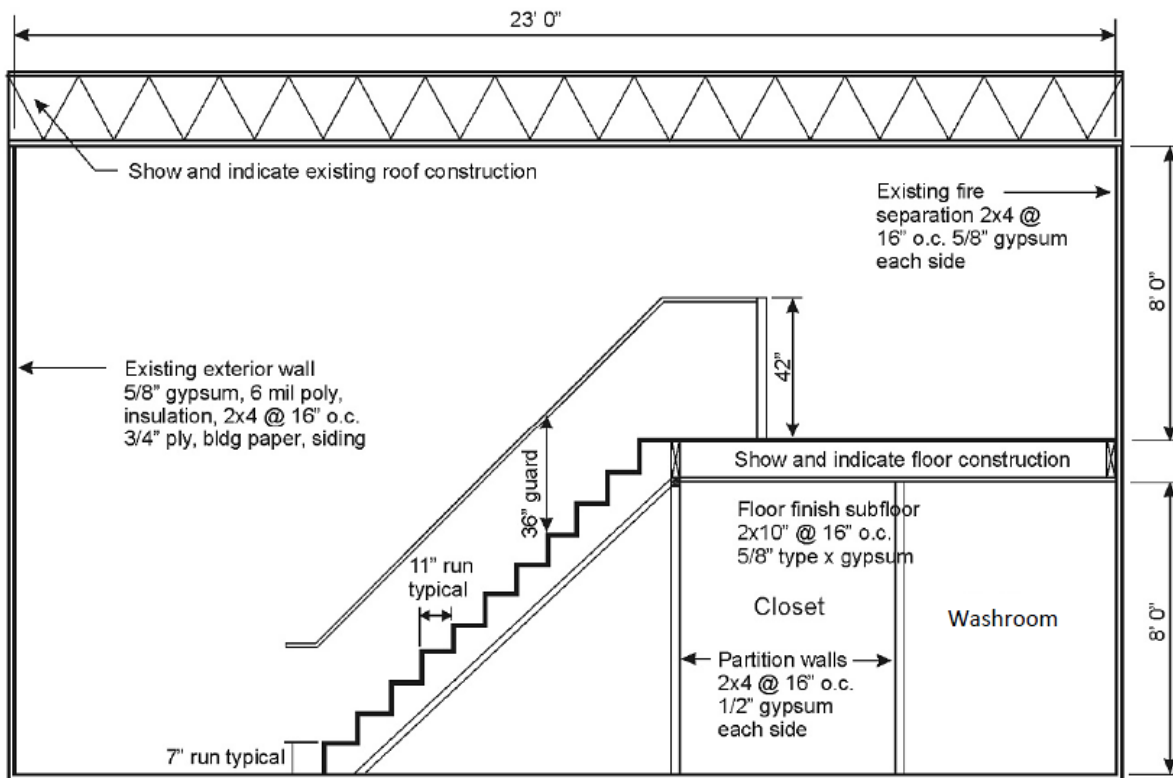


Figure 5 Cross Section A-A (to be 1/4" = 1'-0")

TENANT IMPROVEMENTS

FAST TRACK PROCESS

Planning and Development Department

Building Permits Division

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GUIDE OVERVIEW

The City of Coquitlam Tenant Improvement (TI) fast track process is designed to facilitate the approval process for simple Commercial Tenant Improvement (CTI) Applications. The CTI Fast Track Process is designed for CTI applications involving retail oriented uses and regular offices that are located in specific commercial and industrial zones and that do not involve: a change in use, new or extended mezzanines, significant changes to plumbing, external modifications or net increases/decreases to floor area (including gross leasable floor area in planned shopping malls).

CRITERIA:

Fast Track Permits are issued for minor alterations to existing building elements, as well as minor alterations to existing plumbing and mechanical systems. Fast Track Permits cannot involve a change in use (as this would trigger Zoning Bylaw review by Development Planning staff). They are available for projects where the work involves no additions to or alteration in size of the structure, no structural changes requiring engineered design by a licensed professional engineer and that do not require plan referral to other departments. Fast Track Permits are for applications involving retail oriented uses and offices.

Fast Track Permits are limited in scope and must meet the following criteria:

- Applies to commercial uses located in all commercial and industrial zones.
- No proposed change of use.
- No net increase/decrease to the floor area of the unit or the gross leasable floor area in a building.
- No external modifications (unless the Development Permit has been issued and provided to Building Permits Division staff).
- Minor plumbing changes which are associated with replacement of existing plumbing fixtures (i.e., straight fixture replacements do not require a plumbing permit, however, if minor modifications to the plumbing system – fixture relocations, vent repositioning, fitting modifications, capping – are needed, the building permit may be issued in advance of the plumbing permit).
- Single Level Racking Systems without stair access (storage must be under 12' in height and the racking system must not exceed storage height of sprinkler system design capability)
- Minor exterior alterations and additions that are less than \$150,000 in construction value

TENANT IMPROVEMENTS

FAST TRACK PROCESS

Note: Any previous outstanding deficiencies, permits or unpermitted construction may result in a delay of your application processing or ineligibility of the use of the fast track permit process.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

This is a general list consolidating common requirements compiled for information only and should not be considered a complete list.

- Applicant to engage a professional when preparing drawings for this application.
- Substandard drawings will not be accepted.
- Permit drawings must provide sufficient information to describe the full scope of work.
- Submissions are required to comply with the latest version of the British Columbia Building Code and applicable City of Coquitlam bylaws and regulations.
- All drawings are to be neat, to scale and of draftsman quality.
- Metric or Imperial standard may be used, but not mixed.
- Agent Authorization Form (if applicable).

PERMIT SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Three sets of all required plans must be submitted.

- Plans showing the location of the proposed improvement, including parking layout.
- Site plan indicating the relationship of work to adjacent tenancies.
- Architectural construction drawings at 1/8" to 1'-0" scale or greater (showing layout and dimensions of proposed work).
- Title search.
- Value of construction.
- Defined use of building and parking requirements, if applicable.
- Two sets of sealed structural drawings and Schedule B Letters of Assurance (complete with full legal description).
- Schedule "A" required if more than one registered professional is involved.
- Show all room use (unfinished to be marked as such).
- Occupant load calculation required (if occupancy classification has changed).
- Required exits (including door sizes, travel distances, etc.).
- Three sets of electrical drawings (i.e. emergency lighting and exit signs, etc.).

TENANT IMPROVEMENTS FAST TRACK PROCESS

- Show the location of the building on the property.
- Show all other buildings on the property.
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PERMIT SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS CONTINUED

- New and existing work area calculations.
- Location of fire separations and assemblies (include details of rated assemblies).
- Cross sections through structures or detailed notes showing construction materials.
- Indication of all new beam sizes (structural) and lengths, door and window openings with sizes.
- Three sets of plumbing drawings.

COMMON SHORTCOMINGS THAT MAY DELAY THE ISSUANCE OF A PERMIT

Corrections, revisions and/or missing information that are not provided to City staff in a timely manner may result in the cancellation of the permit application.

Table 1 provides a list of application shortcoming examples. This list is not exhaustive and it is recommended that City staff be consulted prior to submitting a building permit application.

TABLE 1
Incomplete or missing information on the application: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drawings are not coordinated between registered professional disciplines.• Incomplete drawings, specification notes and quantities.• Unauthorized work either not identified or not addressed.• Site plans missing or submitted without the required information, such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• address;• unit number;• building number;• floor level;• identification of adjacent tenancies; or• parking requirements.• Engineered drawings for all structural modifications.

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FAST TRACK PROCESS

TABLE 1

- Plumbing drawings for:
 - new restaurants;
 - dentist/doctor offices; or
 - dry cleaners.
- Mechanical drawings for new kitchens (see [Commercial Cooking Equipment Guide](#)).
- Improperly executed Letters of Assurance.
- Architect’s or engineer’s drawings submitted without the seal of the registered professional.
- Poor quality draftsmanship.
- Submission of concept or schematic plans instead of construction drawings.

Common BC Building Code shortcomings:

- Handrail extensions required for exit and access missing from drawings.
- Rake back nosing proposed on stairs.
- Insufficient exits / egresses.
- Travel distances exceeded.
- Estimates of construction cost.
- Failure to provide new washrooms to “Accessible” standards (see our [Accessible Washroom Design Guide](#)).
- “Access” requirements for doors not accommodated (doors providing “Access” must be 3 feet minimum for 2’-8” clearance).
- Inadequate “Access” side door latch clearances.
- Required “Accessible” change rooms not provided.
- Emergency lighting and exit signs missed.
- Modifications to fire alarm system missed.
- Failure to provide swinging mandoor in the grill / sliding doors (i.e. in malls these doors must be included in allowed single egress suites served by grills / sliding doors).
- Missing plumbing permit submission.
- Missing sprinkler permit submission where partition relocations or new features affect the sprinkler design.

Common Development Planning shortcomings:

- Introduction of a new use not permitted in a particular zone.
- Failure to comply with Zoning or Development Permit provisions.
- Failure to comply with easement or covenant requirements.
- Failure to provide adequate parking.

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FAST TRACK PROCESS

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